Method Statement MS01

Gable render removal and front, rear and gable brickwork repairs and repointing

96 Ladybarn Lane, Fallowfield, Manchester — listed semi-detached house

Planning reference: PLA-2026-000941
Purpose: submission in support of the discharge of Conditions 6 and 7.

- Condition 6 — cement render removal: details of the proposed test panel and the method of removing the existing external cement render.
- Condition 7 — brickwork repairs and repointing: an on-site sample panel showing the proposed brickwork repairs, pointing finish and mortar mix, before the corresponding works commence.

1. Description and scope of work

The works comprise careful removal of the existing cement render from the gable elevation, localised repairs to defective brickwork and lime-mortar repointing to the front and gable elevations within the approved extent. The aim is to retain the existing historic brickwork and sound mortar, repair only where necessary and achieve a compatible finish that respects the character of the house. Wholesale replacement of sound pointing or brickwork is not proposed.

This statement sets out the proposed working method and approval stages. It must be read with the consent decision notice, approved drawings, Diagram 01 and the structural engineer's repair and temporary-works details. The condition descriptions above summarise the requirements recorded in the original draft; the decision notice remains the controlling document.

2. Preparations and structural safeguards

Before any external wall work, including the trial panel, complete the internal floor strengthening, buttress walls and basement strengthening walls identified in the project sequence. Obtain confirmation from the structural engineer that the wall is sufficiently stable for the proposed work and that the required temporary support is in place. Scaffolding must not be assumed to provide structural support unless specifically designed to do so; provide the specialist scaffold and temporary-support design before starting on site.
Provide safe scaffold access and protect windows, doors, rainwater goods, adjoining surfaces and neighbouring property from impact, dust and debris. Keep access routes clear. The contractor shall prepare site-specific risk assessments and safety arrangements, brief the operatives and use appropriate protective equipment and dust controls. Check materials to be disturbed for hazardous substances before work begins.
Photograph the elevations, existing pointing, cracks and damaged bricks before work begins. Mark the proposed repair areas and trial-panel location on the elevation drawing. Use operatives experienced in repairs to historic brickwork, with the work supervised by the contractor and reviewed by the architect; structural matters shall be referred to the structural engineer.

3. Trial panel and approval hold points

Prepare the proposed 1 m² gable trial panel at the red-square location shown on Diagram 01, subject to agreement of its position with the Local Planning Authority (LPA). Use the same operatives, tools and proposed materials intended for the main works.

Condition 6: first undertake controlled render removal within the trial panel only, following Section 4. Record the render's adhesion, the tools used, the exposed brick condition and any damage. Make the panel and photographic record available for inspection. Do not extend render removal beyond the trial panel until written LPA approval has been obtained.

Condition 7: within the agreed sample area, demonstrate the proposed joint preparation, lime-mortar mix, pointing profile and finish, together with representative brickwork repairs where these are proposed. Agree with the LPA whether the gable panel is sufficient to demonstrate the front-elevation work or whether a further representative panel is required. Do not begin wider repointing or brickwork repairs until the sample and associated details have received written LPA approval.

Provide a written sample specification identifying the lime binder and grade, aggregate source, colour and grading, mix proportions by volume, batching method and joint finish. Select the mix to suit the existing masonry, surviving historic mortar and exposure; do not adopt a generic mix or NHL grade without assessment. Allow sufficient curing for the sample's colour and texture to be assessed.

Retain the approved sample panel as the workmanship benchmark until the works are complete. Keep the written approvals and sample specification on site. Changes to the approved tools, mortar, finish or repair approach require review by the architect and agreement with the LPA before implementation.

4. Cement render removal

Begin in the trial panel at a loose edge or an area of weak adhesion. Use a small hammer, hand chisel and scraper, working gently in small sections at a shallow angle to separate the render without cutting into the brick faces or levering against the brick edges. Do not pull away large sheets where this could detach masonry. Once the trial is approved, repeat only the demonstrated method within the numbered work zones.

Heavy percussion tools, angle grinders, abrasive blasting, high-pressure washing and chemical stripping are not part of this proposed method. If firmly bonded render cannot be removed without damaging the brickwork, stop locally; do not increase force. Record the problem and obtain the architect's advice and LPA agreement to any revised treatment before proceeding. Refer loose or unstable masonry to the structural engineer.

Remove loose residues with soft brushes. Do not attempt to obtain an artificially uniform or "as new" brick surface by scouring away the historic face. Photograph the exposed masonry and mark any defects requiring review. Collect debris as work proceeds and remove it without damaging the building or overloading the scaffold.

5. Brickwork repairs and structural crack repairs

Inspect the exposed wall with the architect and identify only those bricks that require repair or replacement. Retain sound historic bricks, including those with minor weathering that does not impair their function. No extensive dismantling or rebuilding is authorised by this method statement. Where replacement is necessary and within the approved repair scope, remove individual defective bricks carefully without disturbing adjacent masonry. Use sound, suitable reclaimed matching bricks as proposed in the original specification, subject to assessment and sample approval. Match the existing size, colour, texture and bond, and bed and point in the approved compatible lime mortar. Do not remove adjoining units together where this would weaken the wall.
Helical crack stitching shall be undertaken only where required by the structural engineer's project-specific design and covered by the relevant consent. Bar type, length, spacing, embedment, slot dimensions and grout shall be specified by the engineer; the approximate generic dimensions in the original draft are not a construction specification. Prepare and install the system in accordance with the engineer's details and the manufacturer's instructions, then finish the visible joints to match the approved panel. Do not substitute pointing mortar for the specified structural grout.

6. Joint preparation and lime-mortar repointing

Repoint only defective joints within the approved areas. Retain sound historic mortar. Carefully remove loose or failed pointing with hand chisels and small hand mortar rakes, without widening the joints or damaging brick edges. Normally prepare to approximately twice the joint width and sufficient depth to receive sound new pointing; establish the actual depth in the trial panel. Do not apply a blanket 30 mm minimum or rake deeply into bedding mortar without the structural engineer's agreement.

Brush loose material from the joints and use controlled, low-pressure clean water where necessary to remove remaining dust. Pre-dampen the joints to control suction, without saturating the wall or leaving standing water. Batch the approved lime mortar consistently using measured quantities. No Portland cement, unapproved additives or substitutions shall be used in the pointing or bedding mortar.

Pack mortar firmly into the prepared joints, filling the depth without voids; build up deeper joints in suitable layers. Keep the brick faces clean and avoid smearing mortar across them. Finish at the appropriate stage of stiffening to reproduce the profile and texture of the approved sample, based on surviving appropriate historic pointing. Do not introduce a new recessed, raised or decorative profile without approval.

7. Protection, curing and phased working

Protect fresh work from rain, frost and rapid drying caused by sun or wind. Use damp hessian with suitable weather protection, arranged so that it does not rub against the fresh joints and the wall remains ventilated. Keep the mortar appropriately damp during curing and follow the agreed mortar specification and supplier's curing guidance. Do not undertake lime work where weather conditions or forecast frost prevent proper protection and curing.
Carry out render removal, joint preparation, any designed crack stitching, brick repairs, repointing and initial curing in the numbered zones and sequence shown on Diagram 01. The indicated zones

are approximately 1.5 m × 1.5 m. Do not strip render or rake out joints across an entire elevation at once, and do not open adjacent areas in a way that compromises stability. The structural engineer shall confirm the working limits and the conditions for progressing to the next zone.
Maintain temporary support throughout the required period. Stop immediately if new movement, widening cracks, bulging, loose masonry or damage to historic fabric is observed. Secure the area and obtain the structural engineer's or architect's instructions, as appropriate. Where a change affects the approved repair method or appearance, agree it with the LPA before continuing.

8. Inspection and completion records

The contractor shall check each completed zone against the retained approved sample, including joint filling, finish, mortar consistency, brick matching and protection. The architect shall review the visible conservation repairs; the structural engineer shall inspect structural repairs at the stages specified in the design.
Remove mortar residues with soft brushes at the appropriate stage, without abrasive cleaning or damaging brick faces. Maintain curing protection until the mortar has developed adequately under the agreed specification. Remove temporary supports only on the structural engineer's instruction.
Retain dated photographs before, during and after the works, the approved sample specification, mortar batch details, the written LPA approvals and inspection records. Record any agreed departures from the original method. Provide the completion record to the applicant and architect and make it available to the LPA if requested.

9. Material.
POINTING MORTAR
Roundtower NHL
3.5 Coarse is a factory-blended, dry ready-mixed lime mortar made with Natural Hydraulic Lime (NHL 3.5) and a 5mm down coarse kiln-dried sand. Designed for bedding, pointing, and general-purpose masonry, this mortar is also suitable for use as a base render coat, particularly in traditional or breathable construction.
Roundtower NHL 3.5 Coarse combines the strength and breathability of NHL 3.5 with selected additives that enhance workability, extend open time, and reduce shrinkage risk, all while maintaining the essential properties of a cement-free, vapour-open lime mortar.
Key Benefits

- Pre-Mixed for Consistency – 2:5 NHL to coarse sand ratio ensures reliability and performance across bags.
- NHL 3.5 Strength – Suitable for medium-strength applications, including external pointing and bedding.
- Improved Workability – Extended open and finishing times make it ideal for site work.
- No Cement or Synthetic Additives – Breathable and conservation-appropriate.
- Versatile Use – Suitable for new builds, historic masonry, and breathable render systems.
- Eco-Friendly Packaging – Supplied in recyclable 25 kg bags with polythene lining.

Conservation guidance: the repair principles follow Historic England, Repointing Brick and Stone Walls, SPAB, Repointing and SPAB, A guide to the repair of old brick walls. These general references do not replace the approved site-specific specification.

10. Diagram 01 — trial panel and working sequence

The red square identifies the proposed 1 m² sample panel. Numbered areas indicate the proposed working sequence; each zone is approximately 1.5 m × 1.5 m. Refer to Section 7 for the phased-working restrictions and Section 9 for the drawing information required with the submission.

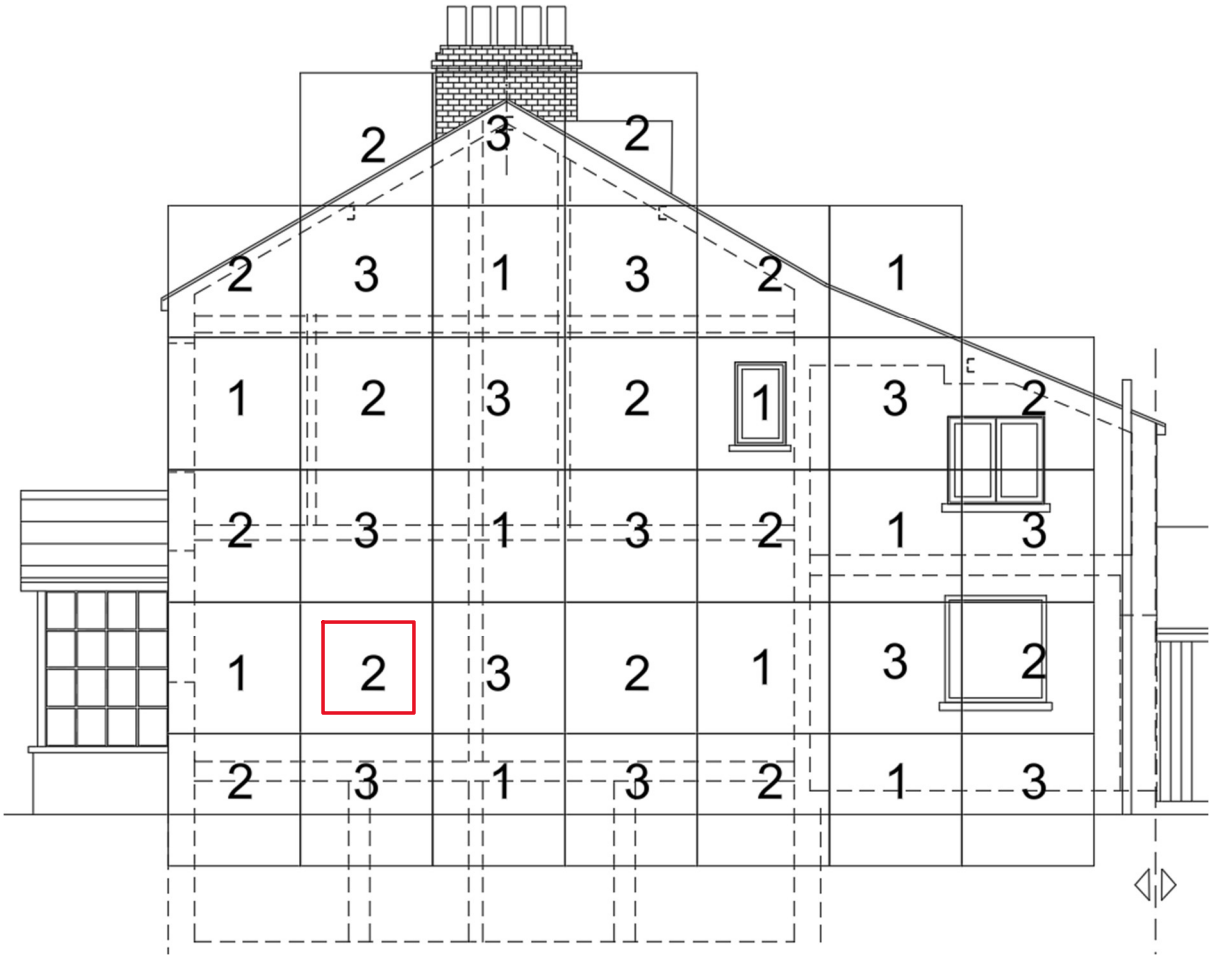


Diagram 01. Sample Panel red square.
Numbered areas shows work sequence. Areas approx. 1.5m x 1.5m.